

Testimony  
Education Committee  
Public Hearing 3/19/2015  
Bill 1095 AN ACT CONCERNING STUDENTS ASSESSMENTS.

My name is Mary Burnham. I am a retired educator.

**I am deeply troubled by the annual standardized testing being proposed in this bill.**

The changes increase the years students in CT schools will be tested. These tests are taking up valuable teaching time.

The days allotted to testing and the additional days put aside to prepare for the testing, the cost of test prep instructional materials, and the cost in lost instruction time for our students are all unnecessary as the test results themselves will not provide any more information than teachers already know. Students in more impoverished districts will perform significantly less well than children in more affluent suburban districts. This is not rocket science, and it has been repeatedly established in multiple studies.

**Before you pass the changes to this Act you, as legislators, should know the answers to these questions regarding SBAC tests:**

How are the psychometric properties of these tests actually measured?

Have their psychometric properties been reliably evaluated by independent experts?

Has anyone analyzed the normative data distribution associated with the standardization sample?

How will the writing components of the test be scored?

How do you condone putting our students through an assessment process that has been designed to ensure that 70% of the students taking the test will not meet the predetermined cut-score that has been set by the test company who are predominantly out-of-touch with both classroom instructional practice and how children learn?

Since we are already required to assess our students - K-5 - on universal screening measures three times a year in pre-reading, reading fluency and comprehension, math computation and mathematical concepts, why do we have to lose more valuable instruction time by putting our students through these redundant assessments?

Since there is a great deal of secrecy surrounding the content of these tests and the past practice of not releasing the test questions or answers, how can students, parents, and teachers accept the accuracy of the test results – how can you?

Since all school districts and public schools in CT have already failed to meet the 2014 NCLB requirement of 100% Proficiency of their students, why are we moving forward with an unproven, untested, and experimental test protocol for our students? These tests are purposefully designed to perpetuate the myth that our schools are failing and that our teachers are ineffective; why, then, are we continuing to support that misguided and deceitful messaging?

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